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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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8 August 1966

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3. Nigeria: Eastern governor resists authority of
new Supreme Commander Gowon. (Page 4)

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Nigeria: [Eastern Military Governor Ojukwu continues to resist acknowledging the authority of new Supreme Commander Gowon.]

[Ojukwu, a native easterner, is insisting on certain prerequisites before he will accept Gowon, the army's top-ranking northerner, as deposed General Ironsi's successor and before he will agree to Eastern participation in projected interregional negotiations.]

[Ojukwu's terms, which he claims are necessary to establish "confidence" and security, include "categorical" information about Ironsi's fate and the whereabouts of missing army personnel from the Eastern Region. Ojukwu has expressed a desire for face-to-face talks with Gowon, but only at some location where the personal safety of all can be assured--thereby apparently ruling out an early visit to Lagos on his part.]

[Clearly concerned about the predominance of northerners in the army battalion based at Enugu, the Eastern capital, Ojukwu is also demanding "neutralization" of the army by the return of each tribal component to its home region. He indicated on 4 August that once such separate regional armies were established, some loose federal arrangements might be continued. He thus appeared to have pulled back somewhat from his earlier insistence that partition is the only solution for Nigeria.]

[Current attitudes of important Ibo civilians, especially former Eastern premier Okpara, are not yet known, however. Okpara, who had been detained by Ironsi, has just been released from prison, along with

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almost all other confined politicians and may attract more popular support than Ojukwu. Prior to last January's coup, which destroyed Nigeria's Northern-dominated constitutional government, secessionist sentiment had become strong within Okpara's Eastern regional regime.]

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